

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-21 are pending in this case. Claims 1, 12, 15, and 21 are amended by the present amendment. Amended Claims 1, 12, 15, and 21 are supported by, for example, the specification at page 9, line 12 to page 10, line 6 and page 16, lines 22-31. Thus, no new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-18, 20, and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Vaudreuil (U.S. Patent No. 5,740,230) in view of Thorne et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,958,005, hereinafter "Thorne") and Ogilvie (U.S. Patent No. 6,711,608). Claim 19 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Vaudreuil in view of Thorne and Ogilvie and further in view of Yokomizo (U.S. Patent No. 6,163,796).

Claim 21 is amended to correct an informality.

With regard to the rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Vaudreuil in view of Thorne, that rejection is respectfully traversed.

Amended independent Claim 1 recites in part:

a plurality of message gateways, each message gateway being configured to receive and transmit over at least one dedicated transfer medium, and
a message broker connected to the message gateways and being provided with a client database,
wherein a first message gateway receives a message from a sending client over a first transfer medium and transmits the message or information extracted thereof to the message broker, ***the message broker changes an originator identification included in the message received from the sending client to a unique and anonymous alias identification*** and automatically selects an appropriate second transfer medium depending on content of the client database and the message or information extracted thereof, and the message is sent to the target client via a second message gateway configured to transmit over the second transfer medium selected by the message broker.

Thus, in the claimed invention, the message broker changes an originator identification included in a message received from a sending client to a unique and anonymous alias identification. By using an anonymous alias identification, the claimed message broker prevents the identity of the originator from being discovered by the recipient of the message. On the other hand, because the alias identification is unique, the receiver of the message can nevertheless respond to the originator using the alias identification. This is very practical in communication scenarios like auctions and house sales, for example.

It is respectfully submitted that none of Vaudreuil, Thorne, or Ogilvie teach or suggest this feature. In fact, none of Vaudreuil, Thorne, or Ogilvie appear to describe any technique to hide the identity of an originator of the message from the recipient while maintaining the recipient's ability to respond to the originator. Consequently, none of Vaudreuil, Thorne and Ogilvie teach or suggest "a message broker" as defined in amended Claim 1. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that amended Claim 1 (and Claims 2-11 dependent therefrom) is patentable over Vaudreuil in view of Thorne and Ogilvie.

Amended independent Claims 12 and 15 recite similar elements to Claim 1. It is respectfully submitted that amended Claims 12 and 15 (and Claims 13, 14, and 16-21 dependent therefrom) are patentable over the cited art for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to Claim 1.

With regard to the rejection of Claim 19 as unpatentable over Vaudreuil, Thorne, and Ogilvie in view of Yokomizo, it is noted that Claim 19 is dependent from Claim 15, and thus is believed to be patentable for at least the reasons discussed above. Further, it is respectfully submitted that Yokomizo does not cure any of the above-noted deficiencies of Vaudreuil, Thorne, and Ogilvie. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 19 is patentable over Vaudreuil, Thorne, and Ogilvie in view of Yokomizo.

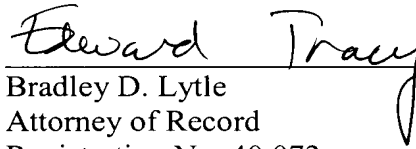
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Reply to Office Action of December 12, 2007

Accordingly, the pending claims are believed to be in condition for formal allowance.

An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bradley D. Lytle", is written over a horizontal line.

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